

THE QUAVER,

WITH WHICH IS PUBLISHED "CHORAL HARMONY,"

A monthly Advocate of Popular Musical Education,

And Exponent of the Letter-note Method.

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No. 76.]

APRIL 1, 1882.

[One Penny.]

THE LETTER-NOTE METHOD,

An easy System which

TRAINS TO SING AT SIGHT

FROM THE ORDINARY NOTES.

Its Tenets are these:—

1. That **METHOD** involves a careful Graduation of the lessons, a thorough Treatment of every point studied, and an Elucidation of Principles as well as Facts.

2. That the **STAFF-NOTATION**, taking it all round, is the **BEST** yet invented, affording peculiar advantages to the **PLAYER**, and also to the **SIGHT-SINGER** who understands his work.

3. That the best systems of sight-singing are those founded upon the **TONIC DO** principle, because the **KEY** is a mere accident, but the **SCALE** is the **TUNE**, and it is by the relation which the sounds bear to the Tonic and to each other (not by their pitch upon the Stave) that the Vocalist sings.

4. That the easiest possible mode of teaching on this principle is that termed **LETTER-NOTE**, which appends the Sol-fa initials to the ordinary notes, and either withdraws the letters gradually, or otherwise trains the pupil to dispense with their aid.

5. That Letter-note provides the most direct **INTRODUCTION** possible to the staff notation, because the Pupil is trained from the **OUTSET** by means of the symbols employed in that notation.

6. That Letter-note, while it is legible by every Player, gives the Singer all the **AID** derivable from a specially contrived notation.

7. That the assistance of Letter-note in learning to sing is as **LEGITIMATE** and **ADVANTAGEOUS** as the "fingering" printed for the use of the Pupil-pianist.

8. That, although the habitual use of Letter-note is quite unnecessary to the matured Sight-singer, it increases the reading power of the **YOUTHFUL** and the **UNSKILLED**, enabling them to attain an early familiarity with a better class of music, and thus cultivating a higher musical taste.



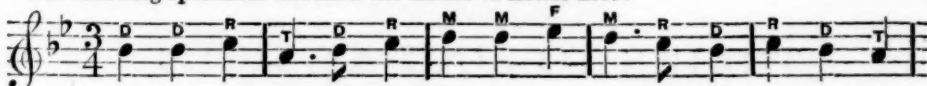
THE LETTER-NOTE METHOD.



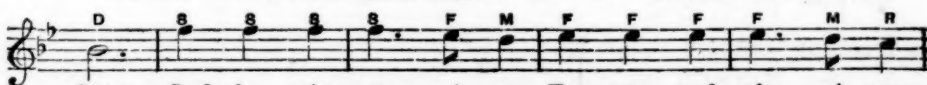
LETTER-NOTE appends to the ordinary staff notation the sol-fa initials, on a principle identical with that adopted in former years by Waite's figure method, and at the present time by the Tonic Sol-fa and Chev  methods. Experience has shown that as sight-singing pupils have to undergo two distinct processes—1st, that of cultivating the faculty of tune, and training the ear to recognise the tonality of the sounds; and 2nd, of acquiring a practical acquaintance with the symbols and characters used in musical notation—it is expedient to give the learner some educational aid in acquiring the former while the latter is being studied. Accordingly most of the methods in use at the present time either discard the staff altogether, or else add thereto during the earlier stages certain contrivances for the help of the pupil; the latter is the plan adopted and advocated by Letter-note.

The advantages claimed for Letter-note are, that the power of reading music thus printed is acquired by young pupils quite as easily as either of the new notations; and, once this degree of proficiency is attained, a very slight effort is needed in order to dispense with the aid of the sol-fa initials—so slight, in fact, that young persons often accomplish it of their own accord, without help from their teacher. Further, the notation learned first is that which is likely to remain most familiar and easy, simply because it is learned first; and Letter-note secures the advantage that the student uses the staff-notation from the very commencement of his reading lessons.

The following specimens will show the nature of Letter-note:—



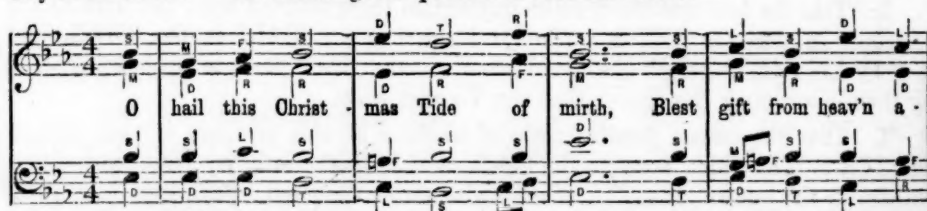
God save our gra-cious Queen, Long live our no-ble Queen, God save the



Queen. Send her vic-to-ri-ous, Hap-py and glo-ri-ous,

The above are the modes of printing adopted at the commencement, at which stage the pupil needs bold and legible symbols and initial letters.

After progress has been made, when the reader is able to depend more upon the notes and uses the letter only when he is in doubt, it is found possible to reduce the size of type, and also to print the music in condensed score, without inconvenience through the multiplicity of signs—an arrangement which renders Letter-note music "as cheap as the cheapest, and as easy as the easiest." The following is a specimen of condensed score:—



These advantages, together with a very careful graduation of the lessons, will, it is hoped, render the elementary text-books useful to all engaged in the work of music-teaching. At present these training-books are well and favourably known in many of the better class seminaries of the Metropolis; the method is also extensively used in evening classes at Birmingham and other large towns.

For the guidance of teachers in making their selections, it is expedient to explain that Letter-note works adopt two distinct methods of teaching, and may be classified thus:—

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| The Letter-note Singing Method and Choral Guide | { | In these works every note throughout carries its sol-fa initial, and they can be used by the very youngest pupil. |
| The Junior Course | | |
| The Choral Primer | | |
| The Penny Educators | { | The Sol-fa initials are here gradually withdrawn, and these books can be used to best advantage by senior scholars or adults. |
| The Graduated Course and Pupil's Handbook | | |
| The Elementary Singing Master and Elementary Singing School | | |

THE QUAVER is published on the 1st of every month. Price One Penny, including from four to eight pages of music printed either in Letter-note or ordinary notation. Post free for twelve months,—one copy 1s. 6d., two copies 2s. 6d.

Advertisements.

The charge for Advertisements is 1s. 6d. for the first twenty words, and 6d. for each succeeding ten.

To Correspondents.

Write legibly—Write concisely—Write impartially.

Reports of Concerts, Notices of Classes, etc., should reach us by the 20th of each month.

The name and address of the Sender must accompany all Correspondence.

Teachers of the Letter-note Method are respectfully urged to send us from time to time full information respecting their work.

The Quaver,


April 1st, 1882.

Music with this Number:—

Letter-note School Music, Nos. 1 and 2.

Training by Means of Chord-Relationship.

Who invented the Process?

 HORD-RELATIONSHIP is a handy term for which we have to thank Sir Robert Stewart. By it is understood the connection which exists between the sounds forming a triad or other chord, *not* the relation of one chord to another; just as the fellow term "key-relationship" signifies the kinship of the seven sounds in the key, *not* the relation of one key to another. Training by means of chord-relationship is that mode of teaching interval which uses the sounds of the triads of DO, FA, and SOL as first steps for a beginner; and its advantage is thus stated in the "Letter-note Singing Method," page 8:—

The connection existing between the tones forming a triad is very close. As already ex-

plained the third, fifth, and octave, are the most closely related sounds to the key-tone, and the same rule applies to all the other sounds with their thirds, fifths, and octaves. In practising interval we shall, therefore, avail ourselves of a circumstance so fortunate for the singer. It will enable us to get at the various intervals more easily and naturally than if we practised all the thirds, fourths, etc., *seriatim*; for it does not by any means follow that because two intervals are of the same name and magnitude they are similar in effect, any more than it holds good that persons of the same stature must be similar in disposition.

This principle is used both by Tonic Sol-fa and Letter-note. Unfortunately for us, its origination is very often credited to Tonic Sol-fa; and for the reasons stated at page 38 we shall here endeavour to show its true paternity. Previous to the publication of Letter-note, the Tonic Sol-fa routine during the earlier stages was as follows. First, a given number of exercises in the intervals formed by the triad of DO only; next, exercises employing seconds only, or, more usually, seconds intermixed with the intervals of the triad; then exercises designed to illustrate the mental effect of the sounds. But no chord, except the triad of DO, was specially used in the study of interval. Most of those older works are still in print, and reference to them will show this plainly. In the "Old Standard Course" (published in 1858, and forming the parent work to all the courses issued for many years afterwards) the first 18 exercises proceed strictly as above stated, except that Ex. 13 contains the interval RE-SOL through the repetition of a phrase. After which, the mental effect of the sounds is illustrated thus:—

For LA—SOL DO MI LA (page 18), MI LA SOL (Ex. 21.)

For FA—SOL FA, and DO FA (page 12), MI LA FA (page 13.)

For RE—DO RE MI (Exs. 22 and 23), RE FA MI (Ex. 23), DO RE SOL DO (Ex. 25.)

For TI—DO TI RE (Ex. 23), DO TI RE, and SOL TI DO (Ex. 24), etc., etc.

The first Letter-note work ("The Graduated Course") was published in 1863. In this work, after the three preliminary lessons in seconds (usual in Letter-note text-books, and intended chiefly to establish in the mind of the pupil that association between sound and syllable upon which his future work

depends) the real study of interval begins with the sounds of the triad of DO; next, those of the triad of FA; and then those of SOL; *all* the sounds of the triad being given in each case (Lesson IV, page 5, and Exs. 28 to 30.) In this, the first attempt at anything of the kind, the subject is introduced tentatively and succinctly: nevertheless, the fact remains that it was the first known attempt in that direction, and the process is claimed in the preface as a distinctive feature of the work. In the next text-book ("The Junior Course" commenced 1864, and issued at intervals until complete), the process is more fully developed, experience having proved its efficacy. Here the triad of SOL is introduced before that of FA, some dozen exercises illustrating each; and a precisely similar routine has been followed in Letter-note text-books to the present time.

Next, referring to Tonic Sol-fa once more. Towards 1872 the text-books show a slight change of method gradually effected; but in 1872, or shortly after, the "*N.w* Standard Course" was issued, and from this time we may date the change. Here *two* triads—those of DO and SOL—are prominently used, but that of FA less so. And the earliest work found, which formally adopts teaching by means of the *three* triads, is "Musical Theory" (1876), at page 6 of which the following appears:—

This fact of the chordal structure of the scale is the foundation of the Tonic Sol-fa method of teaching to sing. * * * First the principal chord, that of DO, is fixed in ear and voice. At the Second Step the chord of SOL is added to it, and at the Third Step the chord of FA completes the scale. We thus teach by consonance.

This survey shows that Tonic Sol-fa began just as we did—tentatively; and, finding the plan answer, carried it out to fulness. But in each step of the journey Letter-note has been considerably ahead, and our impression is that we at this moment use the principle of chord-relationship more fully than they.

Every reader of the English language will learn with regret that Henry Wadsworth Longfellow passed to his rest on the 24th of last month. So close is now the connection

between the two English-speaking nationalities, his departure will be regretted here as much as there. For though America may with just pride claim him as her greatest poet, his sympathies were world-wide, and world-wide also is his fame.

It is possible that Dr. Hullah will be appointed as Principal of the new Royal College of Music. No better choice could be made, and we hope *that* point is "fixed" rather than "movable."

The Revised Education Code allows a grant of sixpence per head for singing by ear, and one shilling per head for sight-singing.

The Duke of Edinburgh, it is stated, is composing a comic opera, the scene of which is laid in Russia, the plot having been suggested by the Duchess of Edinburgh.

Gospel Oak, London.—At the Congregational Chapel, at a Sunday School Festival held on March 1st, Mr. D. Colville's "Advent of Flora" was very successfully performed by a choir of about 100 voices, principally juveniles. As many of the little choruses are simply harmonised melodies, the greatly preponderating treble was just as it ought to be. The semi-religious tone of the words adapts this composition to the use of such festivals; and the excellent style in which both songs and choruses were delivered shows that the music finds its best interpreters among the youthful. The choir was trained by Mr. Daniel Baldry, who conducted: the part of "Flora" was well rendered by Miss Hetty Hyde, Mr. D. Davies (notwithstanding a cold) accomplishing the tenor song, and Miss Gillard as pianist, providing an effective accompaniment.

At the same place a concert is announced for March 28th, at which Mesdames Clara Suter, Mudie-Bolingbroke, Sams, with Messrs. Ballantyne and Winn, are vocalists. Trumpet, Mr. T. Harper; Violin, Mr. G. H. Betjemann; Piano, Mr. G. R. Betjemann and Miss Gillard; Conductor, Mr. J. Gittens.

The Quaver Composition Classes.

A new Postal Class, for beginners, will commence the study of Harmony and Musical Composition in July. All communications respecting the class to be addressed

The Secretary of The Quaver Composition Classes,
47, Lismore Road London, N.W.

By what Means can National Education in Music best be promoted?

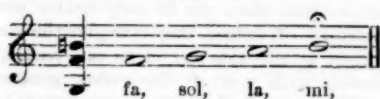
By SIR ROBERT STEWART.

(Continued from page 34).

THESE were the syllables in use in Shakespeare's day, and everyone conversant with King Lear will remember where Edgar enters in the 2nd scene of the 1st act, and is accosted by Edmund thus:—

My cue is villainous melancholy, with a sigh
Like Tom o'Bedlam. Fa, sol, la, mi!

And here we have a further proof, if proof were needed, of the truth of Shakespeare's illustrations, for no better example of a musical "sigh" can be conceived than this Tritone melody—furnished, let us say, with a lute-chord to fix its tonality, and sung in falsetto by Edmund:—



To enumerate the various devices for notation would be in itself a task. In addition to the 1,020 Greek characters, which Kiesewetter ridicules as "straight, tumbling, oblique, mangled, mutilated, and distorted," there were the fifteen Roman, from A to P, and the Hindu words—

Sa, vi, go, ma, pa, dha, ni, answering to—
A B C D E F G.

There was also a set of syllables peculiar to Belgium, neither Oriental, Greek nor Latin: *Bo, ci, pi, ga, lo, ma, ni*. There was also the Welsh notation already alluded to. Jean Jacques Rousseau invented a system of teaching by figures, in which the figure 1 stood for the tonic; at present the letter-note plan of Mr. David Colville, of Paternoster-row, London, somewhat resembles it. In 1809, a clergyman named Pfeiffer, who loved education, and a music-publisher, Nageli, residing at Zurich, took up Rousseau's idea of the figure notation, and these two, working in concert, gave an immense impulse to the class-teaching of music in Germany. They adopted the classification of the famous teacher Pestalozzi: time, tune, and force, they called rhythemics, melodies, and dynamics.

The system of M. Bosquillon Wilhem, adopted in France under the reign of Louis Philippe, seems to have been derived from a method employed so far back as the sixteenth century

by Sebald Hayden, the teacher uses a pointer (*indicateur*), and the scholars sing according as he points to different spots of lines on the board, as if notes were written; thus, all the intervals are indicated, although no notes are really before the eyes of the class. When away from the classroom, the place of the board with lines is supplied by the open hand of the pupils, which they are taught to use as the five lines and four spaces, thus reproducing Guido's device, the Guidonian Hand of the eleventh century. This method of Wilhem was adopted by the British Government about 1830, and for a while succeeded; but of late years it has disappointed expectation, although not only had it been ushered into use by all the influence of the Government, but accompanied by printed class-requisites of extreme convenience and beauty. As the Fixed Do, or Hullah system follows that of Wilhem, so the Tonic Sol-fa, or letter system, with every key-note called *Do*, has its French counterpart called the "Galin-Paris-Chevé method."* This plan is officially and publicly recognised in France, being thus more favoured than the Tonic Sol-fa in England, which I fear has been rather sat-upon officially. This is the more singular, since the opinions of Sedley Taylor, of General Perronet Thompson, and of the great Professor Helmholtz have been strongly expressed in favour of the Tonic Sol-fa method and at this moment I have before my eyes a paper by Professor Macfarren of Cambridge (an authority which for competence and truthfulness none can gainsay), contributed by that gentleman to the *Cornhill Magazine* for 1868, in which the writer "adduces, with thankful pleasure, the sight-singing of 4,500 Tonic Sol-faists, in a way that fulfilled the highest requirements of the severest judges."

But irrespective of these opinions, which cannot but carry great weight as the utterances of some of the most scientific and thoughtful men in Europe, I can speak from personal experience; and it is my belief that by associating, as Mr. Curwen's system does, a character of its own with each note of the scale, and by laying especial emphasis upon chord and key-relationship,† the Tonic Sol-fa system is better calculated to draw out the intelligence of the singers than any other with which I am acquainted. The scholars of this system seem to keep the pitch better, many persons believe that they read at sight better, and I have certainly witnessed remarkable instances both of sight-singing and of singing from dictation amongst them. Regarded merely as a general introduction to vocal music, the Tonic

* Invented by M. Galin and Mme Chevé about 1817.

† See Editor's remarks at the end of the Paper—page 38.

Sol-fa is cheap, rapid, and simple; and by the time a good knowledge of its letter-symbols is acquired even the ordinary staff-notation will be found to offer little difficulty. I offer this as my own honest opinion, being unconscious of any prejudice, which, if it existed at all, would be most naturally enlisted in favour of that old method upon which I myself was taught to read at sight.

But whatever system be adopted—that of Lancashire or of Yorkshire, the Fixed or Movable Do, the Wilhem-Hullah, or the Tonic Sol-fa, I would certainly cause sight-singing to be taught at every school in the country, and I would have the progress of the pupils verified from time to time by inspectors, who should in no case accept singing by ear as a test of attainment, as too frequently happens in England at the present day.

It may seem to many of you an old-world notion, but I am disposed to think there can be no really first-rate musical education save one associated with the daily practice of worship-music. Dr. Burney, in his very pleasant "Musical Tour," remarks, that "it seems as if the national music of a country was good or bad in proportion to that of its Church Services"; I think it is only under the shadow of some great ecclesiastical foundation that the classically sculptured beauty, the reverent grandeur of ancient choral music, can be experienced and practised. The ordinary conservatorial education aims only at making the pupils skilled artists, vocal or instrumental, whichever the bent of the scholar's genius or gift may suggest. The ancient anthem, or the motet, is not marketable, it will not pay, and so it is not studied. But the names of Geo. Fred. Handel, of Sebastian Bach, of Wolfgang Mozart, and of Joseph Haydn rise up before us in support of my theory that the sacred influences of daily life under the shadow of the church goes a long way in directing even genius itself into the noblest paths of the musical art; for so at least these eminent men learned, and worked, and grew great.

When people are disposed to descant upon the modern progress of music, they are sure to bring forward the vast increase in the manufacture and sale of the pianoforte as a proof of the advancement of the art, and it is an undoubted fact, that, including London (which produces some 24,000 per annum), there are annually made in Europe 60,000 of these instruments. But so far am I from thinking this an unmixed good, that I am disposed to attribute the decay of choral music in some degree to the popularisation of the pianoforte, the so-called domestic orchestra; which is so powerful, so adaptable, and so easy an instrument that its use has naturally almost absorbed or extinguished the practice of all other kinds of music.

Two or three hundred years ago, those who loved music had but a few poor-toned instruments within their reach; for the lute, the virginal, and spinet were weak, tinkling things when compared with human voices; and viol music, with those "ravishing divisions" of which the poet speaks, was in reality extremely elaborate and difficult. Part-singing, therefore, became the natural and universal resource, and as this had to be learned without instruments, singers were obliged to acquire the first principles of music, and to sing by note. But now, the omnipresent pianoforte spares all trouble. The conductor strikes the chord upon it for his choir; the young ladies who take up a new song to try whether it be pretty, or whether it will suit their voices or not, ascertain these things, not as their ancestors could and would have done, by reading off the notes with voice and eye, but by spelling out the air—generally with one finger only—upon the piano keys.

Another, and a more serious drawback to the use of the piano is, that its keyboard gives young people a false idea of music, by accustoming them to believe that there can be only twelve sounds in an octave—if, indeed, they ever give the matter a thought at all—this any of us can realise, by conversing with one of the rising generation about E sharp, when we are pretty certain to be somewhat thus interrupted or corrected, "Oh yes! that's F." The piano, however, is so generally deemed an excellent accompaniment and support for voices, that should any of us hazard in mixed company the assertion that, by its faulty, tempered scale it rather tended to make people sing out of tune, we should probably be met by a smile of incredulity.

The celebrated concert and oratorio singer, M^{me}. Mara, was known to have advocated teaching all singers the violin; "For," said she, "instead of perpetually telling your pupils, you are flat, or you are sharp, you can in a moment indicate the precise amount of their error, by means of the finger upon the string." Now the pianoforte is incapable of this, and of course so must every keyed instrument be. But having spoken of the piano as a hindrance to vocal sight-reading, and a doubtful ally for intonation, it is but fair to admit its many good points in opening up to us the treasures of orchestral writers in an adapted form. Let us be just, too: the tempered scale, which has done not a little harm to singing, has suggested to pianoforte writers the most charming equivocations, and in particular to Beethoven—that emperor of all modulation—the most noble, nay, startling, changes of key, in his works for the pianoforte, alone or in combination.

Nevertheless, I do not believe piano music is generally loved for its own sake; if this were the case, people would scarcely converse as they do

while it is going on. A song is generally—not always, however—listened to; especially if it be a love-song, for then the words supply a theme which everyone can understand. But music in these countries is too often looked upon as an ordinary accomplishment, which—like the French and German languages—must be learned, but as an agreeable pastime only. With most persons its use is merely regarded as a kind of soothing pleasure after dinner, or an occasional accompaniment to conversation. There are two causes for people practising the demoralising custom of talking while music is going on; firstly, a great many people do not care about music at all; and, secondly, young people attempt pieces too difficult for them, to which they cannot do justice; sometimes, indeed, those who attempt bravura pieces in this way cannot play a study, or even a scale properly, and are quite incapable of accompanying a simple ballad at sight. And it seems to me that for all this, the pupils are more to blame than the teachers, since they dislike scales, neglect studies given for technical advancement, and never try, as they ought constantly to do, to decipher new music, the only means of making an expert sight-player. This last should be done daily, if even only for a short space of time; it should never be omitted; for to singers or players unable to read off immediately easy pieces at first sight, their music is of very little value, and, it may be added, is of still less to their friends.

Among the means of spreading the knowledge and practice of music in social life, there is one that we certainly must not pass by, viz., to hear, and if possible to study, the classics of that very interesting instrument, the organ. Every city in these kingdoms, should like Newcastle-on-Tyne, Leeds, Manchester, Liverpool, Glasgow, and Belfast, possess a fine hall, in which should be erected as noble and perfect example of the so-called king of instruments as could be obtained. Dublin is peculiarly unfortunate in both these respects. We have got, indeed, one large music hall, but it is so peculiarly ill-adapted for musical purposes that in the centre of the floor it is impossible to hear with satisfaction; there is an imperfect, cobbled-up organ in it, rarely played, and still more rarely listened to, for to converse during instrumental music is, and I believe always was, one of our besetting sins. This is one of those customs in reference to which, like Hamlet, I would cry "O reform it altogether!" When seated at one of the German festivals, I often think of our home audiences, wishing it were possible for them to witness the decent silence maintained during the music at Bonn and Baireuth; a silence, however, that is by and by to be exchanged for loud shouts of "Hoch! Hoch!"

blasts extempore from the brass instruments, and thundering rolls from the drums, whenever the audience delights to honour some favourite performer or composer, or the conductor himself, during the intervals of the music. But should those remedial measures ever come to be applied which to-day I venture to advocate before you, our chattering audiences would soon cease to exist, being replaced by real listeners like those who throng the places of musical resort in Germany. And now it is high time for me to draw to a close, but, ere I do so, I would wish briefly to recapitulate the plans I would suggest, for promoting National Education in Music. These are:—

1st. Historical Concerts; 2nd. Lectures on the Scientific and Philosophical aspects of music; 3rd. A better style of pianoforte teaching, with more attention to sight-playing, and the knowledge of classical form; 4th. The inclusion of sight-singing as a regular part of the course of study at every school in the country; 5th. A resident orchestral band of sixty performers to refine and guide the taste of the public, at present quite incapable of comprehending instrumental pieces of large calibre; 6th. A good concert hall, and a really fine organ erected there, on which should take place performances (during which absolute silence should be the rule), the admission fees to be low, 3d. and 6d. To these I would add (7th) the inclusion of music as a voluntary subject in the curriculum of the universities; * 8th. Some authorised qualification for teachers of music; and (9th) the means for adequately trying over, and, if found worthy, producing in public the works of young composers, who are now placed at a great disadvantage by the impossibility of their works being heard.

Nor would the effect of these nine measures be by any means confined within their apparent limits: for example, to teach the whole population to read music off by sight would improve church music incalculably in the course of even one generation, and to accustom the middle class to hear a fine orchestra at a weekly concert would insensibly raise the whole tone of musical appreciation; while the lectures dealing with acoustics, those on musical form, and similar philosophical phases of the science and art, would act and react upon the whole nation. At the same time, by the sending forth of authorised teachers alone, quacks being discountenanced, the entire musical body politic would be so leavened by healthy

* Sir Frederick Onseley, the learned and admirable University Professor of Music at Oxford, lately obtained from one of the English bishops, a concession of this sort in the case of deacons.

indoctrinating influences, that in the future this once discordant Western Isle would be for ever "full of noises, sounds, and sweet airs that give delight and hurt not."—*Musical Standard*.

Referring to our footnote (†) at page 35, we have to remark, As all the items for which Tonic Sol-fa is here commended are in full blast in Letter-note, it is clear that equally good results are obtainable from our method, and the proprietors have been favoured with Sir Robert Stewart's dictum to that effect.‡ In fact, one of the items mentioned—that of "chord-relationship," by which term we understand teaching interval by means of the triads of DO, FA, and SOL—is a Letter-note process, being an original device of the method. Credit is due to the *originators* of a process rather than its *adopters*; and in the present case the originators are also the *developers*, for this process is more fully carried out in Letter-note than elsewhere. Full information on these points is given at page 33 of this sheet.

The doctrine of *key-relationship* (or, as we term it, *tonality*), "associating a character of its own with each note of the scale," is also fully taught by Letter-note. The source from whence the doctrine has been derived is stated in the "Choral Primer," page 81; and it is believed that the Author quoted there and at page 82 was in the field earlier than Mr. Curwen.

For the rest, we cheerfully admit that Tonic Sol-fa has earned the Lecturer's commendation by good honest work: when Letter-note is 60 or 70 years old,§ and has produced like results, we doubt not that it will win similar approbation. But we do not admit, neither does Sir Robert Stewart affirm, that what is genuine in the present success of Tonic Sol-fa is peculiarly the result

* "The Tempest," Act iii, scene ii.

† Speaking of Letter-note, Sir Robert Stewart writes (July 9th, subsequent to delivering the above paper), "Your system seems to me to retain most of what "is so good in the Tonic Sol-fa System: I mean the "associating the same syllables with semitones, and "the characteristic effect of each number of the "Scale." We have no doubt all unprejudiced musicians will agree that every educational use conferred by Tonic Sol-fa is derivable from Letter-note, with the further advantage that the staff-notation is used from the outset, and becomes familiar and easy to the pupil for that very reason.

§ Mr. Curwen's Tonic Sol-fa is over 40 years old, but including Miss Glover's work it is nearly 70.

of its notation. No doubt, Mr. Curwen has done his work by means of that notation; but we believe and know that Mr. Curwen, much as he has been able to accomplish, could have done work greater in amount and less sectarian in kind by the aid of Letter-note, which is equally serviceable and less inconveniencing to other interests.

Let our Teachers, therefore, work on bravely. Letter-note, thanks to Sir Robert Stewart, has been "mentioned" at a Social Science Congress; and our Teachers, who well know its capabilities, also know that it rests with themselves to win for it as high a position as any. We are not yet aware of its adoption to any great extent in the "Emerald Isle": but as soon as the problem respecting the three F's has received happy solution, perhaps school and music teachers there will agitate in favour of education by aid of the three triads, DO, FA, and SOL; and the three symbols, letter, note, and staff. Ireland's national emblem is a trefoil.

Regarding Sir Robert Stewart's paper itself, we cannot refrain from saying that rarely indeed have we read so excellent a handling of the subject. And not the least of its recommendations is its all-roundness. Many such treatises are more or less one-sided, being either too highly theoretical or too lowly practical—viewing the subject either too much from an artistic standpoint, or too purely from an educational. But here all interests and classes, from the Professor and the Scientist down to the Pater-familias and the School Miss, have due consideration. The Lecturer has, as it were, placed the tip of his pen in the very centre of the circle; and from thence his arguments radiate, straight as an arrow, to all points of the circumference. Every musical educator, we feel sure, will thank Sir Robert Stewart for so admirable a paper.

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Professor Macfarren on the Tonic Sol-fa Notation.

THE month of March, which proverbially comes in like a lion, has witnessed as vigorous an onslaught on the Tonic Sol-fa notation as any we have yet seen. Our remarks on the preceding page were barely in type, when, as if to emphasize some statements therein respecting the inconvenience of the notation, the following appeared. It is a letter addressed to the Right Hon. A. J. Mundella, M.P., Vice-President of the Council of Education, by Dr. G. A. Macfarren, Professor of Music in the University of Cambridge, and Principal of the Royal Academy of Music:—

Sir,—I am told that it is contemplated by the Council of Education to authorise the use of the so-called Tonic Sol-fa system of musical notation in elementary schools throughout the country; and, as I think strongly on this subject, I trust you will allow me to offer my carefully-formed opinion for your consideration. I think the system to be bad, because it hinders the acquisition of a sense of pitch, which is a most valuable quality for musicians; because it confounds the characteristics of keys, which have distinctly different harmonic derivation; and because many of its signs are so vague that persons familiar with the system often mistake them. I think it to be inconvenient, because it can only apply to music up to a very definite limit; because persons who have learnt this system have greater difficulty to acquire the ordinary technicalities of music than those who begin to study the art from the standard notation; and because persons who can read only from this system are unable to participate in musical performances with those who read from the usual alphabet. I think the adoption of the system unjust, since imposing on the poor an expenditure of time and money which they can never turn to any practical account, and placing them at a disadvantage with the rich, who are able to read musical publications of all countries; whereas the use of this exceptional notation is confined to a sect in England and some of its Colonies alone.—I have the honour to be, Sir, yours faithfully, G. A. MACFARREN. 7, Hamilton-terrace, N.W.

Hitherto, in many of the skirmishes, Tonic Sol-fa has had a sort of loop-hole of escape

in the fact that its opponents were interested parties, and therefore strictures from such quarters might be passed by in silence; but not so here, for the nature of Professor Macfarren's allegations, and the position which he worthily occupies in the musical world, compel an explicit defence. We shall await with much interest the reply. Meanwhile, we cannot compliment our friends upon the answer supplied in the subjoined resolution.

The following resolution was passed unanimously at a full meeting of the Bow and Bromley Institute Choir on Tuesday, March 14th, in reference to Dr. Macfarren's letter to the Education Department:—"Resolved that the members of the Bow and Bromley Institute Choir have read with profound regret a letter reflecting on the Tonic Sol-fa System, addressed by Dr. Macfarren to the Education Department. They observe with much amazement the unqualified statement that Tonic Sol-fa pupils 'can never turn their labours to practical account' and 'that they are unable to participate in musical performance with those who read from the usual musical alphabet.' They recall the fact that for many years this choir, composed of singers who read at sight from one or other of the two notations, has freely and easily rehearsed and performed with public approbation numerous oratorios and other classical music, and they rejoice to believe that their labours have been turned to very practical account in that they have enabled large audiences to hear and appreciate the manifold beauties of the oratorio 'St. John the Baptist,' of the cantata 'The Lady of the Lake' (twice performed), and of numerous other compositions by Dr. Macfarren. Conductor, W. G. McNaught, A.R.A.M." The Bow and Bromley Institute Choir consists of about 110 certificated singers from the Sol-fa Notation and of about 20 singers who read only from the staff notation.

We know Mr. McNaught to be a sensible man, a sound musician, and an excellent conductor: we are, therefore, at a loss to understand how he could have sanctioned so lame a defence—if indeed defence it be, and not an emollient for Tonic Sol-fa application only. Viewed as an answer to Professor Macfarren's attack, it resembles the act of a man who, on emerging from a scrimmage with his coat-buttons torn off in front, and the coat itself ripped up behind, sets about stitching on the buttons, forgetting altogether the chasm in the rear. For nothing whatever

is said in reply to the first charge—that the notation is *bad*; and only a small portion of the second (its *inconvenience*) is alluded to. But more: the replaced buttons when closely examined are found to be very loose and unreliable still; for Professor Macfarren's contentions are evaded, not answered. Thus first, the inability "to participate in musical performances with those who read from the usual alphabet" is supposed to mean that it is physically impossible for a Tonic Sol-faist and a Staff-notationist to sing on the same platform! But Professor Macfarren's allegation is, that when staff-notation copies only are procurable, the Tonic Sol-faist who sings from his own notation only is necessarily dumb. Will any sane Tonic Sol-faist deny this? Next, "they observe with much amazement the unqualified statement that Tonic Sol-fa pupils 'can never turn their labours to practical account;'" and in disproof thereof, "They rejoice to believe that their labours have been turned to very practical account," etc. But the fact is, Professor Macfarren's charge is qualified by the concluding clause of his sentence; and his meaning evidently is, that the sight-singer's acquirements can never be turned to practical account *except* in connection with the only notation he has learnt.

This last charge of Professor Macfarren's has, however, a greater depth of meaning. His letter tersely expresses the facts of the case; it is addressed to "a leader of the people" who necessarily is able to see as far through a milestone as any; and to those who look underneath the surface of things, this sentence and the whole letter are pregnant with signification. Observe: the charge is that of *injustice*. Ratepayers are taxed in order to popularize a notation which many of them condemn; the poor have to spend time and money without learning the universal notation after all; the result of this teaching does not tend as much as it ought to replenish the ranks of the national Choral Army; but, instead thereof, by far the larger proportion of the recruits remain exclusively in the ranks of Tonic Sol-fa, and by far the larger share of the pecuniary profits accrue to Tonic Sol-fa interests. So long, therefore,

as taxes are levied for such purposes, so long will the question arise, Is this just?

But the question is still further hampered by another consideration, viz., that the Tonic Sol-fa notation, by putting an artificial line of separation round its pupils, and to a great extent deterring them from herding off into the wide wide musical world, enables Tonic Sol-fa to bulk large in the estimation of the public, thus giving it a degree of popularity which does not rightly belong to it. This probably is *the* advantage in the notation which leads its promoters to condone all its proved disadvantages. No staff-notation Method pure and simple, we even doubt whether any phase of the staff-notation such as ours, can enjoy this advantage in nearly so great a degree. But in the case of Tonic Sol-fa, not only does the notation favour what we may term *sheepfoldism*, but the influence of its promoters has from the commencement been exerted in that direction. The consequence is, that Tonic Sol-fa has now a large following, and every stroke of work accomplished appears to its credit in the national ledger; while the staff-notation methods have comparatively a small following, and the results of their teaching must be looked for on the benches of the Choral Societies and those of the Monster Festivals. In short, Tonic Sol-fa retains under its flag its best sight-singers for an unlimited period, but the offspring of the staff-notation are soon lost to their birth-place; and although the latter may cherish a kindly remembrance of the old school-house, they do not call themselves by its name, nor openly profess allegiance to it. But, however advantageous the line of demarcation may be to the promoters of Tonic Sol-fa, it does not really benefit their pupils, and is the reverse of advantageous to the musical world. Were it not for this barrier, the few year's training which school singers undergo would send them forth perfectly free to go where they pleased, and equipped for academical study or choral uses wherever found. And were it not for this barrier, which keeps the pupils within call for duty or ornament at any time, the public would plainly perceive that the staff-notation methods are

doing a vastly larger share of the national tuition than is usually supposed. This we know, that if all the sight-singers reared in the Letter-note nursery were as accessible as those bred by Tonic Sol-fa, the former alone would muster an enormous army; and we have no doubt every good method has a similar report to make.

From which, this follows (granting of course what we always contend for, and what our Tonic Sol-fa friends have admitted—that every educational use in Tonic Sol-fa is derivable from Letter-note): Tonic Sol-fa enjoys a degree of popularity to which it is not fairly entitled, this popularity being partly the result of the enormous front which it is enabled to present to the public. Its wide-spread organisation too (which also is a consequence of its notation) gives it the power, if it feels inclined, to compete successfully with methods better than itself but less favourably circumstanced, crushing their life out by sheer weight of numbers. Once more then the question arises, If Tonic Sol-fa is to enjoy a position so favoured, wholly or partially at the expense of the nation, is this just?

These are some of the considerations involved in the last division of Professor Macfarren's protest. We may rest assured that every sentence in that letter is full of meaning, and is the result of careful investigation and study. And when a gentleman occupying his eminent position voluntarily comes forward thus, we may also rest assured that nothing short of a strong sense of duty, and a profound conviction that what he says is stern truth, could induce him to risk the odium of appearing to oppose the efforts of a million or so earnest-minded men and women, whose labour is to them a labour of love. Such a protest, coming from such a quarter *demands* an answer, if answer is possible. But we venture to prophesy that as the Tonic Sol-fa notation spreads, so the protests will wax louder and more numerous; for the battle of interests has barely commenced, and the crisis has yet to come.

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The Popular Concerts at Manchester.

IN our monthly notes of last issue, there appears a brief notice of an incident which occurred at Manchester. The notice is as full as circumstances then permitted; but we now learn that the concert referred to was the last of the deservedly successful series given by Mr. De Jong, and through the kindness of a correspondent we are now able to give a full report transcribed from *The Manchester Courier* of Feb. 13th.

MR. DE JONG'S POPULAR CONCERTS

AN UNREHEARSED SCENE.

PROGRAMME.

- Overture....."Masaniello"Auber.
Cavatina—Signor Tecchi.."Fra poco" (Lucia)....
Donizetti.
Aria—Mdlle. Verdini.."Com' e Bello" (Lucrezia)
Donizetti.
Walzt....."Hochzeitsklänge"Strauss.
Air—Mr. Barton M'Guckin "Rose Song"....
(Talismano)..Balfé.
Scena—Madame Sinico.."Softly Sighs"
(Der Freischütz)..Weber.
Descriptive piece for Orchestra "The Forge in the
Forest"Michaelis.
Air—Signor Campobello. "Revenge, Timotheus
cries".....Handel.
Selection from "Faust"....(No. 2).....Gounod.
Overture....."William Tell".....Rossini.
Ballad—Signor Tecchi.."All in All"....Cowen.
Vocal Valse—Mdlle. Verdini.."A che assorta"
Venzano.
Song—Mr. Barton M'Guckin.."When other lips"
Balfé.
Polka "Chinese" Rossini.
New Ballad—Signor Campobello.... "Light"
Barnby.
Ballad—Madame Sinico.."Kathleen Mavourneen"
Crouch.
Irish Ballad—Mr. Barton M'Guckin "Oft in the
stilly night"
March....."Soldier's Life".....Hermann.

The last of the concerts of Mr. De Jong's present series was given on Saturday evening Feb. 11th, in the Free Trade Hall. There was a crowded attendance. The proceedings were marked by incidents which do not, fortunately, mix themselves frequently with the harmony which is the special possession of the concert room. The want of previous rehearsal, upon which we animadverted in our notice of the last concert, created the difficulty which arose. A little delay on the part of Madame Sinico in

appearing to sing suggested that some circumstance was interfering with the pleasant conduct of the concert, and the audience became slightly impatient. This delay was repeated and increased when the air for Signor Campobello was reached, and so also was the impatience of the audience. Finally Mr. De Jong came on to the platform alone, and turning to the audience, addressed them to the effect that the difficulty they were in was due to the familiar circumstance that artistes would not attend the rehearsals. Signor Campobello had not done so, and he put it to the audience whether, under the circumstances, they should not dispense with that gentleman's services altogether. The confirmatory applause of the audience which followed this suggestion was exceedingly hearty. In the midst of it Signor Campobello came upon the platform and attempted to speak. He was, however, saluted with quite a storm of hisses. Mr. De Jong turned to the audience as if to deprecate any discussion; and Signor Campobello, finding the effort to speak useless, retired. Before commencing the second part of the concert with the "William Tell" overture, Mr. De Jong had to again address the audience, who applauded him with great warmth before and during the course of his remarks. While thanking them for their kind demonstration of sympathy and support he stated that the difficulty in which they were placed was not yet finished, as Signor Campobello, who was the *entrepreneur* for the whole of the concert party, with the exception of Mr. Barton M'Guckin, had left the hall, and induced his party to follow him. They were, therefore, left to get through the second part of the concert with only one vocalist. Mr. Barton M'Guckin had, however, kindly promised to sing an additional song; and Herr Volkmer, the accompanist, had with equal kindness, undertaken to play a pianoforte solo; so that he (Mr. De Jong) hoped that after all they would be able to get on as well as possible. These remarks were followed by loud calls of "Flute" from the audience. Mr. De Jong, taking the hint, explained that he had not his flute with him. Replying to further suggestion from the body of the hall that the flute should be fetched, Mr. De Jong stated that he would send for it at once. This announcement called forth very vigorous demonstrations of applause. The second part of the concert was then proceeded with. In the course of it Mr. De Jong, addressing the audience, further, said that as the services that should have been rendered by the artistes who had left the hall had been unfulfilled, and the artistes, therefore, would not be paid, he proposed to hand over to the Manchester charities one-half of the engagement money. The announcement was greatly cheered.

The circumstances we have referred to put the whole concert critically out of joint. Mdle. Verdini (soprano) and Signor Tecchi (tenor) appear to rely so much upon vigorous singing that we were not surprised to find their execution wanting in finish, their voices in freshness, and their intonation in accuracy. The judgment is of course based upon a single selection sung with orchestral accompaniments by each vocalist. Madame Sinico's voice shows signs of wear, curiously enough, in the lower register. Some of the high notes were very clear and true. The scena was not rendered with all Madame Sinico's familiar display of spirit, but it was given with sufficient effect to greatly please the audience, and to secure a recall. The scena seemed to have been lowered a semitone from the original pitch; but whether any contention for this on the part of the singer caused the delay we have referred to we cannot say. Mr. Barton M'Guckin demonstrated indirectly the value of orchestral concerts in connection with selections from instrumental works; for the charming song from Balfe's last written opera suffered much from their want. Mr. Barton M'Guckin did not seem to be in quite his usual voice, but his advancement in all that concerns style and the technicalities of his art is palpable.

For his pianoforte solo Herr Volkman played Adler's *Nouvelle scene de la Bal*. Mr. De Jong chose for his flute solo Bricialdi's variations on airs from *Lucrezia*, which he has already played at his concerts. An extra selection by the band completed the partially extemporised programme of the second part of the concert.

Mr. De Jong announces the continuance of his concerts next season, commencing October 14th. The council of the "Working Men's Club Association" have also arranged to give a series of popular concerts next season in the Free-trade Hall, on the Saturday evening intervening between those of Mr. De Jong's concerts. These will be given at wonderfully cheap prices for admission, and will be under Mr. De Jong's management. Mr. De Jong further announced his benefit concert for February 25th.

Welsh Popular Music.



ON March 7th, at Neumeyer Hall, London, under the auspices of the College of Organists, Mr. J. Spencer Curwen, delivered a very interesting lecture on "Welsh Popular Music." The lecture, which was commendably free from party bias, gave a detailed account of the Welsh *Eisteddfod*, its nature, how organised, mode of training the competitors,

trades and occupations of the prize-winners, and other valuable information. The establishment of similar competitions in England was also warmly advocated: musicians of every creed will admit the desirability of such meetings, and it is hoped the idea will not be allowed to lay dormant. The chair was ably filled by Mr. E. H. Turpin, who in the course of the evening offered some thoughtful comments. Speaking of the standard Welsh melodies, he expressed an opinion that, if as old as they are represented to be, they must have been much modernized since the date of their birth. There can be little doubt such is the fact, the friction of use having polished many of these tunes, and modernized them more or less as the habits and modes of thought of this ancient people have become modernized. Mr. Marchmont Williams and Mr. William Davies (father of the favourite vocalist, Miss Mary Davies) delivered short addresses, supporting the views of the lecturer; to whom and the chairman cordial votes of thanks were tendered.

MONTHLY NOTES.

THE National Training School for music will be finally closed on April 6th, and the premises handed over to the Prince of Wales as chairman of the new Royal College of Music.

The organist of the church at Stoughton, in Leicestershire, has been dismissed by the vicar (Rev. T. J. Redhead) for playing "God save the Queen" in commemoration of Her Majesty's recent providential escape.

The Earl of Wilton, recently deceased, was the composer of several chants, hymn-tunes, anthems, etc., was also a good organist, and in that capacity has frequently officiated in the Chapel Royal.

Among the many operatic libretti sent in to the celebrated French composer, Adam, at different periods of his professional career, in the hope that their perusal might inspire him with a burning desire to set them to music was one—the work of a youthful poet unknown to fame—bearing the attractive title of "Eve." Having looked over the text, which proved to be utterly devoid of literary or dramatic merit, Adam promptly forwarded it to the author with the following happily-turned note:—"Very much honoured Sir—To my lively regret I find it quite impossible to avail myself of the accompanying libretto, with an offer of which your goodness has prompted you to favour me. For, believe me, should

Adam allow himself to be tempted by this particular Eve, the public would most assuredly undertake, with surprising spontaneity, the part of the Serpent—at least, as far as hissing is concerned. Disastrous precedent warns us against a revival of so sinister a combination; therefore I hasten to return your remarkable production, with every assurance of my perfect consideration.—Adam."—*Daily Telegraph*.

The *Musical Standard* says that the Corporation of London are about to give gratuitous instruction in sight-singing, the details of the scheme being in the hands of a musical committee.

In *The New York Courier* appears a description of a newly invented reed or American organ stop-action, by means of which two or more stops can be operated upon simultaneously.

Mr. Andrew Young, author of the Sunday-school hymn, "There is a Happy Land," who is now residing in his native city—Edinburgh—writing to a friend in New York recently, says, "I am thankful to be able to state that my health is good, and that I have all the spring and vigour of twenty years ago." Mr. Young is now in his 75th year.

The losses of the Sacred Harmonic Society seem to have been at an average annually of some £700.

In a lecture on "Wicked Music," The Rev. E. Husband, incumbent of St. Michael's, Folkstone, said:—"If the devil himself wrote a good piece of music, in a musical sense, I would play it as a piece of 'sacred' music; and if an angel from Heaven did, what he couldn't do, namely, compose a piece of music full of wrong harmonies, progressions, and intervals, I would put it on the shelf amongst the bundles and mouldy rubbish of wicked things. Some people's estimate of the sanctity or profanity of music is much like that of the parent who thinks it very wicked to allow his little child to ride on his wooden horse on a Sunday, but allows him to play with his 'Noah's Ark,' because Noah's Ark is mentioned in the Bible."

Darius E. Jones, an American hymn-tune composer, died at Davenport, on the 11th of August last.

A son of Madame Otto Goldschmidt (Jenny Lind) has been appointed to the clerkship in the Chancery Registrar's office, vacated by the appointment of Mr. Charles Carrington as a Chancery Registrar.

A "Kinder-Oratorium" by M. Benoit was sung at Gand, Belgium, by 2000 children.

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I believe I was one of the very first teachers to take up the Letter-note method in the country, and certainly can claim to be the first to teach the system in the Midlands; and now, after 20 years' experience, am able to say I am more than ever convinced that it is by far the best method of teaching to sing at sight. It embodies all the best points of the Sol-fa method, and from the earliest stages pupils are accustomed to sing from the universal notation.

Erdington, Birmingham, May 21st, 1880.

THOMAS G. LOCKER,
*Conductor of Perry Barr Choral Society, Sutton Coldfield Philharmonic Society
Campbell Amateur Musical Society, Birmingham Musical Union, etc.*

I have much pleasure in stating that I have used the Letter-note method for 10 years in Schools and Collegiate Seminaries, giving an average of 20 lessons per week, and after trying most other systems I am quite convinced the Letter-note is decidedly the best. The text-books are systematic and thorough; my pupils are very much interested in their lessons, make rapid progress, and soon learn to sing at sight from the established Notation. I have a large number of letters from Principals of Schools, expressing themselves highly pleased with the Letter-note method.

The Park, Tottenham, London, Nov. 2nd, 1880.

JOHN ADLEY.

I cordially welcome any measures that may facilitate the reading of Choral Music by the masses, and am of opinion that the Letter-note method is well calculated to that end. It combines the principles of the ordinary Tonic Sol-fa system with those of the Staff notation, and disposes of some of the objections which have been urged against the former.

London, Nov. 6th, 1880.

CHARLES E. STEPHENS, *Hon. Mem. R.A.M.*

With pleasure I testify that the specimens of the Letter-note method obligingly forwarded are clear, practical and useful. The method has too a special value, as standing in an explanatory attitude between the Stave notation and Tonic Sol-fa method, and so being of assistance to students of either principle.

London, Nov. 10th, 1880.

E. H. TURPIN,
*Hon. Sec. and Member of Board of Examiners, College of Organists.
Examiner, College of Preceptors; etc.*

I am sure your system is an additional facility to the teaching of sight-singing.

London, Nov. 17th, 1880.

EDWIN M. LOTT,
Visiting Examiner, International College of Music, London.

I am happy to say I think the Letter-note system is likely to be of great benefit to the Choral Societies and Classes in which I am introducing it. I can give no better testimonial than the fact of my having adopted it everywhere.

Dollar, Dec. 15th, 1880.

JAMES M'HARDY.

I have much pleasure in stating that the Letter-note method has been adopted by a Class in Birmingham of nearly 200 members, of which I am the Teacher, and I consider the method excellent.

Birmingham, Dec. 16th, 1880.

ALFRED R. GAUL, *Mus. Bac. Cantab.,
Professor of Harmony and Singing at the Midland Institute.*

Your system, I feel quite sure, is an admirable one.

Birmingham, January 3rd, 1881.

C. SWINNERTON HEAP, *Mus. Doc. Cantab.,
Conductor of the Birmingham, Stoke-on-Trent,
Walsall, Stafford, and Stone Philharmonic Societies.*

The undermentioned gentlemen have kindly signified their approval of the method in the following terms:—

"We are quite of opinion that the Letter-note Method is well calculated to produce good results in training to sing at sight."

W. S. BAMBRIDGE, Esq., *Mus. Bac. Oxon., Professor of Music at Marlborough College.*

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